

# Contribution of Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) on ensuring teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzanian public secondary schools.

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**Abstract:** *This study is about the contribution of Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) on teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzania. The areas of the study were Ilemela and Nyamagana districts in Mwanza Region. Data were collected through questionnaire, interview and documentary review. A total of 348 teachers and 4TTU district leaders constituted a sample. The study used pragmatic paradigm, mixed-methods approach and explanatory sequential design. Quantitative data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. While qualitative data were analyzed by using content analysis. The objective of the study was to determine the contribution of TTU on ensuring teachers' job satisfaction. Findings of the study revealed that TTU have been doing very little in ensuring teachers' job satisfaction. Therefore, to improve performance of TTU it was suggested that TTU should be reformed and made one of the education policy-making organs.*

**Keywords:** *Tanzania Teachers' Union, job satisfaction, public secondary school*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Literatures from different countries, show that the problem of teachers' job dissatisfaction is huge due to low performance of teachers' trade unions. In countries such as the United States of America (USA), United Kingdom (UK), Turkey and Hungary, insufficient salaries, poor working conditions, delay of promotions, long working hours, job insecurity and incentives are the drivers for teachers' job dissatisfaction (TALIS,2018;European Commission,2019). Also, Longmuir et al.,(2022) revealed that in Australia, participation of teachers' trade unions in maintaining teachers' job satisfaction is very low.

Furthermore, Sahito (2019) reported that in the developing countries including Sub Sahara Africa, the magnitude of teachers' job dissatisfaction is very high. The study shows that teachers' working morale is very low due to low salaries, poor working conditions, low motivation, poor accomodation, delayed promotion, low job status and heavy loads. This suggests that high rate of job dissatisfaction among teachers, lowers commitment. Consequently it lowers the quality of education.

In the developed countries like China, performance of teachers' trade unions is low due to high rate of the government interventions over teachers' union activities (Bai, 2010; Dongtao, 2010). Again was reported that trade unions for workers in China are not independent organizations, workers are denied their rights to strike and rights to engage in collective bargaining. Generally, trade unions are working through government directives (Bai, 2010).

Moreover, Bascia(2003) reported that in America, teachers' unions are facing both internal and external challenges. It was revealed that within the state trade union are fragmented due to new emerged trade unions which compete for members. Also, there is a problem of educational policies reform and teacher professionalism. Sometimes the government restrict trade unions from doing effective collective bargaining and professional development (Bascia, 2003).

Likewise, in Turkey (Fidan et al.,2015) reported that teachers' trade unions were not performing its functions such as protecting teachers' rights and strengthening democracy effectively. However, Silman et al., (2021) did a study in Turkey and Greek. The study focused on teachers' perceptions of teachers' unions. The results of the study showed that in both Greek and Turkey, the functions of teachers' unions are related to education and teachers in the sense that teachers' unions are responsible to safeguard the rights of its members. Furthermore, teachers' Unions are responsible to participate in policy reforms. It was also suggested that to make the unions powerful there should be the clearly stated roles especially on issues which affect teachers and learning.

In the developed countries like the United States of America, Scotland, Poland and New Zealand, there are challenges like global educational reform movement which hinder performance of teachers' unions (Bascia&Stevenson,2017). Therefore, it is advised that to improve performance of teachers' unions, the teacher trade union should be reformed. Teacher unions should build their capacity to deal with problems which face them. This can be achieved through involving members at the grassroots in the union activities. This will help members to gain the ability of advocates and activists (Bascia&Stevenson,2017).

Stormiest (2018), found that in Austria, the decline in teachers' status was due to a lack of government efforts to improve teachers' status. He added that teachers' unions are weak in improving teachers' professionalism. Therefore, regarding the information from teachers, it can be argued that TTU has not engaged effectively in promoting the teaching profession, and if this trend persists, it can diminish teachers' job retention.

Likewise, Minter (2014) conducted a study in the developing African countries on Africa Trade Unions and Africa's Future. Findings of the study revealed that trade unions in African developing countries face similar challenges. In Mozambique trade unions have limited capacity in initiatives. In Swaziland trade union federation is currently banned and unions operate with difficulty in non-democratic state. In Zimbabwe, union is weakened by internal divisions while Zambia faces strong competition from different unions and federations.

In Ghana, South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria, trade unions experience similar challenges. The most notable problems include shortage of trained personnel especially on legal and economic issues. This makes difficult to use existing negotiation mechanisms and bring pressure from compliance with existing laws (Minter, 2014). Also, it is reported that bargaining power of workers is weak. The employers do not involve employees in collective bargaining. Unions are not free to implement their roles effectively. Finally, financial constraints and lack of financial discipline are big hinderances to unions. Financial constraints are caused by loss of membership and union segmentation. As a result, unions fail to promote and protect the rights of its members.

Also, data from the World Bank (2003) shows that in six developing African countries-Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Ghana, Zimbabwe and South Africa, the power of trade unions is declining. As a result, members do not trust their unions. Lack of trust among union members over their union leads to low commitment and effectiveness at their work. This suggests that effective measures are to be taken by unions so as to rescue the rights of its members.

According to Bai,(2010) trade unions are working through government directives. They are not independent labor organizations. Also, Chadbourne (1992) revealed that teachers' trade unions in Australia are considered as professional organizations not a trade union. Likewise, Mafisa (2016) revealed that in South Africa, teachers' union is not fully involved in curricular reforms and policy-making as done by the ministry of education. Also, according to Mbene et al.,(2021) policies should be formulated to make adjustment on the demands of teachers.

Also, Kingalu (2015) revealed that in Tanzania Teachers' union is not fully involved in day today functioning of education. Studies show that there is little participation of TTU members in collective bargaining at the grassroots level in Tanzania. As a result, Teachers feel marginalized by their union because of not being involved in decision making on the issues pertaining to their rights. Similarly, Makuthu (2016) contends that in Tanzania, TTU is blamed because of not addressing teachers' problems to the government, which demoralize teachers. Demoralization of teachers leads to teachers' job dissatisfaction.

## **1.2 Study objective**

This study determined contribution of TTU in ensuring teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzanian public secondary schools.

## **2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted mixed-methods approach in order to achieve its purpose. Mixed-methods research approach is a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The use of mixed-methods approach provides flexibility to the researcher to obtain massive information using both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques. Thus, the use of combined methods approach enabled the researcher to gain detailed data on the contribution of TTU on ensuring teachers' job satisfaction. Further, the study was guided by an exploratory research design. Data from questionnaires were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics first by converting data into numeric format before coding them into schemes. Then, all data were entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to compute numerical data into frequency distribution and percentages. Then data were adopted in tables to present the overall picture of the responses. Data from semi structured interviews were analyzed by using content analysis, first, by transforming them into written text, then the units (themes) of analysis were defined. Thereafter, the coded themes were checked to see level of consistency. The process of checking the coded data continued until the highest level of consistency was achieved. At the end, conclusion was drawn from the coded data. The study population comprised teachers from all public secondary schools in Ilemela and Nyamagana districts who are TTU members and district TTU leaders from both districts. These made a total of 2676 participants ; 2672 teachers and 4TTU district leaders (the chairperson and the secretary of TTU from both districts). The sample size was 352 respondents; 348 teachers and 4TTU district leaders. This sample size was convenient as it was able to provide suitable information for the study. The study employed probability (simple random) and non probability (purposive) sampling in selecting study respondents. Simple random sampling was used in selecting schools and teachers for involvement in the study while purposive sampling was used in selecting the 4 TTU leaders. The criterion for using purposive sampling was the uniqueness of the respondents for being the only one in each district. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews and documentary review. The validity of the research instruments were tested through pilot study whereby, twelve teachers from two selected public secondary schools in Ilemela district were requested to respond to questionnaires. The results helped the researcher to correct the questionnaires where necessary and clear out ambiguities. Again, the researcher tested content validity of questionnaires by using expert judgement where by questionnaires were assessed by the supervisors. Then, based on supervisors' advice the researcher made adjustments on the research instruments before being administered to respondents (Mugenda, 2008). In order to ensure reliability of the items in this

study, the researcher used a Test-Retest method, where a sample of respondents from each group who had been interviewed and filled the questionnaires were asked to fill another questionnaire and others were re-interviewed after two weeks (Amin, 2005). The requirements and directives on ethical considerations were adhered to. To avoid plagiarism, acknowledgement of all sources used in this study was done properly with adherence to APA manual 7<sup>th</sup> ed.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### 3.1 Contribution of TTU on ensuring teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools

The study in this objective in tended to determine the contribution of TTU in ensuring teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools. In order to obtain information for this objective, the teacher respondents were subjected to one basic question which asked: How does the TTU contribute on teachers' job satisfaction in Tanzania? To achieve this objective, the researcher developed six assumptions which were considered to be the possible answers of the basic question. With five-point Likert scales ranging from 1=Strongly Disagree SD, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain U, 4=Agree A, and 5=Strongly Agree SA, teachers were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with the given statements describing the assumptions. Then their responses were summarized in the table as shown below.

**Table1. Contribution of TTU on ensuring teachers' job satisfaction in public secondary schools**

Statements given as contributions	SD(%)	D(%)	U(%)	A(%)	SA(%)	Findings in the above table show that 146(42.3 per cent) of 345 teachers strongly
Involvement in collective bargaining	146(42.3)	79(22.9)	54(15.7)	47(13.6)	19(5.5)	
Improvement of working environment	137(39.7)	77(22.3)	53(15.4)	50(14.5)	28(8.1)	
Protection of teachers' rights	122(35.4)	74(21.5)	65(18.8)	59(17.1)	25(7.2)	
Development of teaching profession	138(40.0)	63(18.2)	60(17.4)	53(15.4)	31(9.0)	
Involvement in decision making	155(44.9)	74(21.4)	41(11.9)	53(15.4)	22(6.4)	
Provision of legal advice.	137(39.7)	68(19.7)	35(10.1)	71(20.6)	34(9.9)	

disagreed, 79(22.9 per cent) disagreed, 54(15.7 per cent) remained neutral, 47(13.6 per cent) agreed, and 19(5.5 per cent) strongly agreed with the view that TTU involves teachers in collective bargaining. As observed from the table, a larger number of teachers (65.2 per cent) disagreed with the point that TTU involves teachers in collective bargaining. The implication here is that TTU leaders do not consult teachers and discuss issues about teachers' problems. Also, it was shown that if TTU involves teachers in collective bargaining, then it does little compared to members' expectations.

During the interview sessions conducted with the 4 TTU district leaders, the respondents seemed to support the numerical findings as presented above. They said that teachers were unsatisfactorily involved in collective bargaining. For example, when asked to explain how teachers were involved in collective bargaining, one of the respondents had the following opinions to say: Teachers are actually not involved in collective bargaining; only when it is necessary are TTU representatives from each or some of the working stations involved. This is because of avoiding using much money from the union (TTUL<sub>1</sub>: May 2024).

In response to the same point of view, another respondent supported the above opinions by providing the following views: As you know, each activity done by the union out of the office involves using money. Therefore, the union does not always involve all teachers in collective bargaining; instead, leaders from working stations are involved only when it is necessary (TTUL<sub>4</sub>: May 2024).

The above quotations support the numerical information presented above, which states that TTU does not do enough to involve teachers in collective bargaining, which then affects teachers' performance. This concurs with Makuthu (2016), who noted that there was little participation of teachers in collective bargaining at the grassroots level in Tanzania, although the major role of the Tanzania Teachers' Union should be to involve its members in collective bargaining. However, it has been revealed that TTU had been doing little to involve teachers in collective bargaining. Therefore, with such assumption, it may be argued that some teachers' demands are not achieved due to TTU low bargaining power. As a result majority of teachers experience teachers' job dissatisfaction. Therefore, in order to increase teachers' outputs, TTU should collect teachers' concerns at the grassroots and present it to the government for implementation. By doing so, it will help to eliminate teachers' job dissatisfaction.

Furthermore, the information contained in the above table shows that 137(39.7 per cent) of all teachers who participated in the study strongly disagreed, 77(22.3 per cent) disagreed, and 53(15.4 per cent) were uncertain. In comparison, 50(14.5 per cent) agreed and 28(8.1 per cent) strongly agreed. These findings indicated that most teachers (62.0 per cent) rejected the idea that the Tanzania Teachers' Union contributed to improving the teachers' working environment. This implies that TTU does not help in improving teachers' working environment. The findings are contrary to the findings of Chdbourne (1992), who found that in Australia, the vital role of teachers' associations was to improve the working environment of teachers.

On the same point of view, during the interview sessions with the 4 TTU district leaders, the respondents presented responses which were in opposition to the findings received from teachers. They said that the government has been constructing new schools, classrooms, and toilets and sending to some of the schools teaching and learning resources to improve teachers' working environment as a result of negotiations they made with the government. For example, one of the respondents had the following views to say: TTU reminds the government to improve the teaching and learning environment. TTU would like to see teachers working in a conducive environment. The government has been improving teachers' working environment by building more schools, paying allowances and employing more teachers (TTUL<sub>3</sub>: May 2024).

This indicates that TTU claims to be the source of the schools, classrooms and other improvements made to improve schools' learning environment. The quotation implies that the construction of schools and classrooms going all around the country is a result of TTU negotiations, which is contrary to findings from teacher respondents.

Similarly, another respondent had the following to add during the interviews: A good working environment for teachers has been at the forefront of our agenda of negotiation with the government. We are very concerned with teachers' feelings to ensure that schools are becoming happier environments for our teachers to work (TTUL<sub>1</sub>: May 2024).

The above quotation supports the qualitative findings that TTU negotiates with the government on the improvement of teachers' working environment, the result of which is new schools, classrooms, and toilets being constructed at different places in the country. However, this claim may also not be true since the new schools and classrooms which are constructed may be the implementation of the country's plan to construct new schools and new classrooms to reduce the congestion of pupils and students in classrooms to provide quality education to the citizens.

On the other hand, the findings are consistent with those of Kingalu (2015), who found that the Tanzania Teachers' Union is not fully involved in day the day-to-day functioning of education. Therefore, in creating favourable working environment for teachers' TTU is expected to bargain effectively with the government in order to insure teachers' job satisfaction by improving teachers' working environment. However, TTU remains behind in pressuring the government to create a good working environment for teachers, which agrees with a few respondents (22.6 per cent) who accepted that TTU contributes to improving teachers' working environment. Therefore, based on these facts, it is evident that teachers need a good working environment. Thus, TTU should increase its efforts to demand a better working environment for teachers.

Moreover, findings show that out of 345 teachers who participated in the study, 122(35.4 per cent) strongly disagreed, 74(21.5 per cent) disagreed, 65(18.8 per cent) remained neutral, 59(17.1 per cent) agreed and 25(7.2 per cent) strongly agreed. These findings indicate that a larger number of teachers (56.9 per cent) rejected the view that TTU safeguards the rights of teachers. However, the number of teachers who accepted that TTU safeguards the rights of teachers was also big enough (24.3 per cent) to indicate that TTU participates in defending the rights of teachers to some extent. This implies that the 56 percent who rejected that TTU does not safeguard teachers' rights are not satisfied with the extent to which TTU is participating in defending the rights of teachers. Therefore, little has been done by TTU on fighting for teachers' rights contrary to the expectations of teachers.

During the interview sessions with the TTU district leaders, responses seemed to support the numerical information provided above. The respondents asserted that TTU has been trying its best to fight for teachers' rights like salary increase and payment of salary arrears but it has not been much successful because of some factors including interruptions from the government and cowardice of leaders caused by intimidations from the government. This has caused teachers to regard TTU as a failure. For example, one of the respondents was of the following views: TTU negotiates with the government to adjust teachers' salary scale although the salary increase has not been implemented to meet the expectations of the majority of teachers. We have not attained the level of salary increase expected by the majority because of inability to stand firm on our requests for fear of intimidations or leaders' corruption (TTUL<sub>4</sub>: May 2024).

This suggests that TTU tries its best to send teachers' complaints to the government but it has not been firm enough to enable the achievement of their request to the government, this has been because of either fear of leaders or corruption. This has caused TTU to be regarded as a failure to contribute on teachers' job satisfaction. Additionally, another respondent had the following to say concerning the same idea of TTU to safeguard the rights of teachers: TTU has been safeguarding the rights of teachers in different ways including negotiating with the government to ensure that leave payments and salary arrears are paid on time. However, there has been a delay in paying teachers' debts which has led to demoralization of teachers and observing TTU as a failure to fight for their rights (TTUL<sub>4</sub>: May 2024). The quotation above confirms the earlier provided findings that TTU does not do enough to safeguard the rights of teachers. Again, what TTU claims to fight for on behalf of teachers like salary increase, payment of salary arrears and others take long time, a number of years without being paid and others are almost not done for example salary increase.

These findings are in line with data revealed by the World Bank (2003), that in most African countries the power of the trade unions is declining. As a result, members do not trust their unions. However, these data contrast with data revealed by Silman et al., (2021), who found that in Greek and Turkey teachers' unions are responsible to safeguard the rights of its members. From these findings it can be established that TTU need to learn the better ways of fighting for teachers' rights from other countries especially developed countries. Therefore, since teachers' rights influenced teachers' job satisfaction, TTU should struggle to ensure that teachers are provided with their rights as per agreement with the government. Therefore, TTU is reminded to ensure teachers' job satisfaction by pressuring the government to provide teachers' rights on time.

Also, from the table findings indicated that 138(40.0 per cent) of all teachers who participated in the study strongly disagreed, 63(18.2 per cent) disagreed, 60(17.4 per cent) were neutral, 53(15.4 per cent) agreed, and 31(9.0 per cent) strongly agreed. These findings suggest that most of the teachers (58.2 per cent) were of the opinion that TTU did little in promoting the teaching profession contrary to their expectations. Failure to fully participate in promoting the teaching profession is among the indications that TTU does not contribute appropriately to teachers' job satisfaction.

During the interview session, the TTU district leaders mentioned a number of things related to financial gains and solving problems and prosecutions teachers encounter. None was mentioned that was related to promoting the teaching profession. This supports the quantitative findings that TTU is not involved in promoting the teaching profession as a way of contributing to teachers' job satisfaction. These findings agree with the findings of Stormiest (2018), who found that in Austria, the decline in teachers' status was due to a lack of government efforts to improve teachers' status. He added that teachers' unions are weak in improving teachers' professionalism. Therefore, regarding the information from teachers, it can be argued that TTU has not engaged effectively in promoting the teaching profession, and if this trend persists, it can diminish teachers' job retention.

Likewise, from the table it was revealed that out of 345 teachers who participated in the study, 155(44.9 per cent) strongly disagreed, 74(21.4 per cent) disagreed, 41(11.9 per cent) were neutral, while 53(15.4 per cent) agreed and 22(6.4 per cent) strongly agreed. From these findings it is clear that the majority of teachers (66.3 per cent) denied TTU to involve teachers in decision-making. This means that either TTU leaders have not been consulting teachers for collective decisions or TTU leaders have been implementing issues that teachers have not decided.

During the interview sessions with the four TTU district leaders, the findings revealed that the involvement of teachers in decision-making was a rare commodity. When mentioning the activities TTU does to contributing to teachers' job satisfaction, the four TTU district leaders mentioned nothing concerning the involvement of teachers in decision-making. This indicates that TTU does not involve teachers in decision-making, which supports the quantitative findings presented above. This also acts as a witness to TTU's rare contribution to teachers' job satisfaction.

The above findings agree with the findings of Makuthu, (2016), who found that in Tanzania, there is little participation of TTU members in decision-making. He added that lack of involvement in decision-making makes teachers feel marginalized by their union. The involvement of teachers in decision making should begin from the grassroots to higher levels. It is through involvement of teachers in decision-making that teachers' job satisfaction can be achieved. Therefore, by considering this point of view, TTU is alerted to find out the best way to reach members at their working stations and get their concerns before implementing any issue.



On top of that, it was revealed that out of 345 teachers who participated in the study 137(39.7 per cent) strongly disagreed, 68(19.7 per cent) disagreed, 35(10.1 percent) were neutral, 71(20.6 per cent) agreed and 34(9.9 per cent) strongly agreed. These findings showed that a bigger number of teachers (59.4 per cent) disagreed that TTU had been providing legal assistance to its members once they get problems. However, the number of respondents who agreed that TTU provides legal assistance to its members in case of problems was big enough (30.5 per cent) to suggest that sometimes TTU provides legal assistance to its members who fall into problems. This contradiction may be attributed to ineffective communication between TTU and its members.

During the interview sessions with the 4 TTU district leaders, information obtained seemed to support the view that TTU provides legal assistance to its members who fall under prosecution. For example, one of the respondents had the following to say: 'TTU has been advocating for teachers when they face cases related to misconduct, especially during the period of national examinations, and added that sometimes TTU has not been able to provide legal assistance to teachers who violate laws intentionally. TTU has spent much money for defending teachers who fall guilty (TTUL<sub>2</sub>: May 2024).

The above quotation reveals that there are cases in which TTU provides teachers with legal assistance and cases in which legal assistance is not provided because teachers violate the law intentionally. This indicates that it may be because of this that most of the teacher respondents said that TTU does not provide legal assistance to its members. It may also be because of the shortage of well-trained legal officers who cannot stand to defend some of the cases. Once a teacher falls victim, he/she deserves legal assistance until he/she is sentenced. Therefore, no reason can be given based on the teachers' assumed deeds for denying him/her legal assistance. This lowers the contribution of TTU to teachers' job satisfaction. These findings are in agreement with Minter (2014), who found that in most developing African countries, teachers' unions have a shortage of trained personnel, especially on legal and economic issues. This causes teachers' unions unable to provide legal assistance to their members. Therefore, TTU is supposed to have well-trained personnel. This can be achieved through the provision of financial support to members who are willing to go for higher training for serving the union.

#### **4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on findings, it was concluded that TTU had contributed very little in ensuring teachers' job satisfaction. It has not performed well in involving teachers in collective bargaining, improvement of working environment and protection of teachers' rights. Moreover, there had been low development of teaching profession, low involvement of teachers in decision making and low provision of legal advice.

Therefore, it was recommended that Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) should be transformed from trade union to professional organization so as to make it more powerful and independent in defending teachers' rights. Moreover, Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) should prepare strong programs for educating both TTU leaders and teachers about trade unionism and the rights of teachers. Furthermore, Tanzania Teachers' Union should collaborate with other government institutions like TSC in fighting for teachers' rights. Also, the government in collaboration with TTU should review the policies governing existence of trade unions for the aim of making trade unions particularly TTU more powerful, independent and professional organization.

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